



Release Highlights: April 26, 2007

MONTANA

2005 County Personal Income

<http://ceic.mt.gov/BEACountyData.asp>

Roller coaster movements continue to plague Montana's agriculture-based counties. Personal income, the comprehensive measure of income from all sources, including wages, benefits, pensions and government transfers, soars then plummets annually in such counties as Garfield, Petroleum and Prairie.

For example, between 2000 and 2001, Petroleum County's personal income rose 22.9% then fell by 19.3% the next year, a difference of 42 percentage points. Harvest amounts and their subsequent prices significantly impact these counties with high farm earnings.

Counties with various mining operations have had 'tamer' roller coaster rides. Fallon County, which produces 55% of all Montana's oil and 22% of its natural gas, experienced a 6.1% drop in its personal income between 2001 and 2002, before the energy boom kicked in. However, between 2004 and 2005, county residents saw their personal income boosted by 15.6%. Madison County citizens, with the only talc mines in Montana, experienced stagnant income between 2001 and 2002 then saw their income rise by 11.3% between 2003 and 2004.

This volatility in personal income is reflected in the per capita personal income numbers. (Per capita is personal income divided by the total population). Sheridan County residents earned the fifth largest per capita income in the state in 2003 but dropped to 14th in 2005. On the other hand, Silver Bow County with its copper mine cracked the top five for the first time in the 21st century at fourth in 2005. In 2003, Silver Bow County earned 13th place.

Counties with much more diverse economies, such as Yellowstone, Missoula and Cascade, have all had personal income growth but at single-digit rates. These counties also have not experienced losses in personal income but rather lower growth rates. Yellowstone, Gallatin, and Lewis and Clark counties have all remained in the top 5 since 2000 with Yellowstone number one for all five years.

2005 Per Capita Personal Income and 2004 – 2005 Percent Change in PI

County	Per Capita PI	Rank	% Change	Rank
Yellowstone	\$33,215	1	6.4	13
Gallatin	\$32,434	2	8.6	7
Valley	\$31,328	3	-1.3	52
Silver Bow	\$31,324	4	6.8	11
Lewis & Clark	\$31,151	5	4.6	26

The Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce, released the personal income at the county level on April 26, 2007. For more information, see www.bea.gov Local Area Personal Income.

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